

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5329

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CG US

SUBJECT: APRES SHABA: MOBUTU AND THE AMERICAN CONNECTION

1. SUMMARY: MOBUTU'S OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS OF THE SHABA WAR REMAINS DISTURBED BY WHAT HE SEES AS UNHELPLEFUL, EVEN ANTI-ZAIRIAN STATEMENTS, BY ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN, PARTICULARLY AMBASSADOR YOUNG. HE SEEMED, AT FIRST, ON THE VERGE OF PICKING A PUBLIC FIGHT OVER THESE STATEMENTS, BUT AFTER SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH AMERICANS HERE NOW SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND THE WISDOM OF NOT DISTURBING OUR RELATIONS FURTHER. MOBUTU WAS PLEASED BY THE REPORT OF THE MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY VANCE AND NGUZA. IN ADDITION, GISCARD MAY HAVE TAKEN CREDIT FOR "BRINGING PRESIDENT CARTER AROUND TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ZAIRE'S IMPORTANCE."  
END SUMMARY

2. THROUGHOUT THE DAYS FOLLOWING MOBUTU'S RETURN FROM SHABA, HE SOUGHT OUT OCCASIONS TO LET AMERICANS KNOW THAT WHILE HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR--AND WITH THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCE HE DID RECEIVE--HE WAS NONETHELESS DAMNED UNHAPPY WITH WHAT HE CONSIDERED UNHELPLEFUL, EVEN ANTI-ZAIRIAN, STATEMENTS MADE BY AMERICAN OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY AMBASSADOR YOUNG. ONE SUCH OCCASION WAS DURING A BOAT TRIP/LUNCH WHICH  
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MOBUTU HOSTED FOR THE AMBASSADORS/CHARGES FROM THOSE NATIONS THAT HAD SUPPORTED ZAIRE DURING THE WAR. IN HIS GENERAL STATEMENTS TO THE ASSEMBLED DIPLOMATS, MOBUTU WAS FULL OF PRAISE FOR US ALL AND THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT HE WAS ANY LESS PLEASED WITH THE AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION. ON THE CONTRARY, HE ASKED EACH OF US TO TRANSMIT TO OUR GOVERNMENTS THE PROFOUND GRATITUDE OF THE ZAIRIAN PEOPLE. BUT LATER, WHEN I APPROACHED HIM ALONE ON THE

UPPER DECK, HE CALLED OUT: "AH, C'EST MONSIEUR YOUNG\*" AND I KNEW I WAS IN FOR IT.

3. FOR THE NEXT FORTY MINUTES, MOBUTU AND I TRADED ARGUMENTS REVOLVING AROUND AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S VARIOUS STATEMENTS. THE OSTENSIBLE POINTS WHICH DISTURB MOBUTU HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, BUT UNDERLYING HIS DIATRIBE WAS THE THEME THAT AMBASSADOR YOUNG WAS SO WRONG IN HIS JUDGMENTS THAT MOBUTU THOUGHT HE COULD PUBLICLY DEMONSTRATE THE FALLACIES AND THUS BRING PRESIDENT CARTER TO REPUDIATE HIS UN AMBASSADOR. MY REBUTTAL TRIED TO ADDRESS THIS ASSUMPTION AND I TOLD MOBUTU THAT HE WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO KEEP HIS EYE ON THE OBJECTIVE FACTS OF OUR RELATIONS AND OF OUR ASSISTANCE. IN MY OPINION, US-ZAIRIAN RELATIONS HAD SURVIVED THE SHABA CRISIS SURPRISINGLY INTACT AND I CONCLUDED THAT THE WAY TO KEEP THINGS THAT WAY WAS TO AVOID A PUBLIC SLANGING MATCH. I ALSO TRIED TO DISABUSE HIM OF ANY THOUGHT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER MIGHT BE BROUGHT TO REPUDIATE AMBASSADOR YOUNG. MOBUTU SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND. AT LEAST HE FINALLY ADMITTED THAT HE HAD HAD A VERY GOOD TALK IN LAGOS WITH OUR UN AMBASSADOR. "IN FACT, HE INVITED ME TO THE UNITED STATES." I ALLOWED AS HOW I WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH INVITATION.

4. FOLLOWING MY DISCUSSION, VISITING US BUSINESSMEN MAURICE TEMPLESMAN AND SHELDON VANCE MET WITH MOBUTU. THEY TOO WERE TREATED TO A LECTURE ON THE PERFDY OF US PUBLIC STATEMENTS. BOTH TEMPLESMAN AND VANCE, WITH WHOM I HAD TALKED BEFORE THEY MET MOBUTU, FOLLOWED THE LINE THAT I HAD TAKEN ON THE BOAT. AGAIN, MOBUTU SEEMED TO CALM DOWN, AND THE BUSINESSMEN CAME AWAY WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT MOBUTU WAS ON BALANCE PLEASED WITH US  
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SUPPORT. THE PRESIDENT TOLD TEMPLESMAN, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT HE HAD BEEN DELIGHTED WITH NGUZA'S REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH SECRETARY VANCE. HE ALSO TOLD TEMPLESMAN THAT HE HAD SAID THAT AFTER HIS TALK WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN LONDON THE AMERICANS HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ZAIRE'S IMPORTANCE.

5. COMMENT: MOBUTU IS PERFECTLY AWARE OF THE FACT THAT OUR ASSISTANCE DURING THE SHABA AMOUNTED TO MORE, IN DOLLAR TERMS, THAN ANY OTHER CONTRIBUTION. HE ALSO APPRECIATES THE IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY THE C-130S, THE C-RATIONS AND OUR COMMO GEAR. WHAT HAS MADE HIM MAD IS THE OTHER FACT THAT WE DID NOT COME OUT WITH A PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR HIM AND HIS REGIME. HE IS STILL LOOKING FOR PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION, AND WE CAN EXPECT HIM TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO MOVE US TOWARD A MORE SUPPORTIVE PUBLIC STANCE. HE MAY CONTINUE TO SHOW HIS DISPLEASURE THROUGH A VARIETY OF PLOYS SHORT OF OPEN CONFRONTATION JUST AS HE MAY WELL SOON PASS THE WORD THAT HE WANTS A QUIET AND FRIENDLY DIALOGUE WITH AMBASSADOR YOUNG--DURING WHICH HE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY RAISE THE IDEA OF A VISIT TO THE U.S.

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